

Mission:

To protect, promote & improve the health of all people in Florida through integrated state, county & community efforts.



Rick Scott
Governor

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Vision: To be the **Healthiest State** in the Nation

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DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH RECOGNIZES NATIONAL INFANT IMMUNIZATION WEEK

TALLAHASSEE – The Florida Department of Health will recognize the 20th anniversary of National Infant Immunization Week April 26 - May 3, 2014. The Department reminds parents about the benefits of immunizing children against vaccine-preventable diseases. Immunizations are one of the most effective ways to protect infants and children from potentially serious diseases. Parents should discuss immunization choices with their child's healthcare provider.

"Ensuring that our children are vaccinated at an early age is essential to the health and wellbeing of Florida's kids," said Dr. Celeste Philip, Deputy Secretary for Health and Deputy State Health Officer for Children's Medical Services. "We encourage parents to follow the recommended immunization schedule, providing immunity early in life, before infants and children may be exposed to potentially life-threatening diseases."

Provisional 2013 data from CDC indicate more than 24,000 cases of whooping cough (pertussis) occurred in the US, including 9 deaths. All of the deaths were in infants younger than 3 months old. Pertussis is a vaccine-preventable disease. Although there has been a decrease in incidence since 2012, case numbers of pertussis in the US remain high. The provisional data for 2013 indicate Florida had 729 cases of pertussis, including one death. This represents an increase in the number of pertussis cases in Florida over 2012.

Along with immunizations for infants, adults who care for infants should receive a Tdap booster to ensure that illness is not transferred from caregiver to baby. Through collaboration with health care professionals around our state, we can combat and decrease the unnecessary harm caused by this disease each year by continuing to immunize children and adults.

For information about immunizations, please visit www.immunizeflorida.org or contact your county health department. Health care providers may also sign up to access the statewide immunization registry at <http://www.flshots.com/> to keep an online record of their patients' immunization records.

The Department works to protect, promote and improve the health of all people in Florida through integrated state, county and community efforts.

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